Livin' with the Waters

DON'T LET IT LOOSE

Activity Book

US Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville District

About the Waters Family

The Waters family is a fictional family that moves to urban south Florida and faces everyday challenges. Along the way, they learn valuable lessons about its ecosystem and the plan to restore America's Everglades. The fun-loving members of the family include:

Everett Waters – The faithful father who often gets tired of his daughter's environmental antics

Maureen Waters – The loving mother who is extremely supportive of her daughter's pro-environmentalism

Willow Waters – A rambunctious teenager and a die-hard environmentalist who is always trying to convince her family to conserve and protect the environment

Wade Waters – The fraternal twin of Willow, who is a normal teenager and who just wants to have fun

Lakela Waters – The toddler who likes to follow behind her sister, Willow, but is always getting in the way and causing trouble

Opal Waters – The maternal grandmother who loves to tell stories from the olden days

Otis Waters – The wise-cracking grandfather who thinks he knows everything

About Don't Let it Loose: Florida Invaders

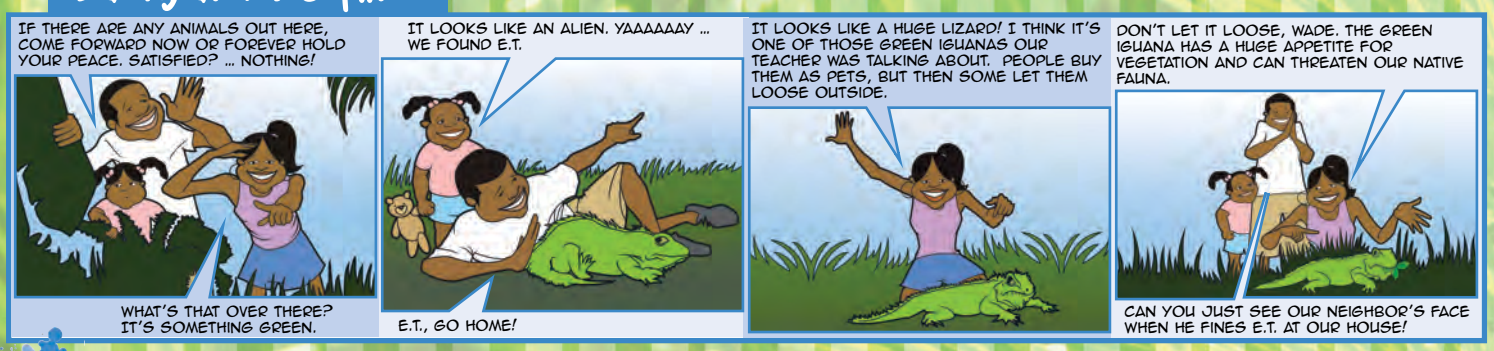
According to the National Park Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, more than 85 million visitors arrived in Florida by land, sea and air to enjoy a taste of our subtropical paradise in 2007. A great place to visit, South Florida is also an inviting destination for a few undesirable species – and they threaten to undermine the health of our environment. More than an inconvenience, invasive plants and animals can greatly alter our native landscape, adversely impact native wildlife, destroy agricultural crops and threaten our health. If you have an invasive species, don't let it loose!

Activity: Hidden Species Puzzle

Instructions: Most backyards are filled with grass, plants and trees. Some plants and animals are native to the Florida landscape. Others are non-native, or exotic, and may not belong here. Non-native species can migrate in on their own, but some are brought in by people. Look at the picture below and see if you can identify all of the invasive species!

Fun Facts According to the National Park Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, south Florida's warm climate and diverse habitats provide ideal conditions for the invasion of foreign reptiles. **Green iguanas** are exotic pets that can disrupt an area's food chain and threaten our native fauna. If you own one, don't let it loose! For more information, visit www.floridainvaders.org.

Backyard Visitor



Activity: Decode the Sentence

Instructions: To learn an interesting fact about pythons, use the letters and symbols chart to decode the sentence that follows.

0	2	5	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
⌗	✧	▢	⏲	↰	✂	✍	⌫	➢	➲	↑	☎
L	**M**	**N**	**O**	**P**	**R**	**S**	**T**	**U**	**V**	**W**	**Y**
✱	⁂	↻	_	☎	✆	✍	✖	✪	❊	⑨	❣

Fun Facts

According to the National Park Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, more than 144,000 **Burmese pythons** have been imported to the U.S. since 2005. In recent years, hundreds have wound up in Everglades National Park and surrounding areas. More than 230 were removed from the park in 2007 alone. Reptiles are popular pets, but residents are encouraged to learn about the needs of a particular species before buying one. Also, if encountering a nuisance python or unwanted pet reptile, contact the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department at 786-331-4454 in Miami-Dade County, or your local animal care and control office for more direction. For more information, visit www.floridainvaders.org.

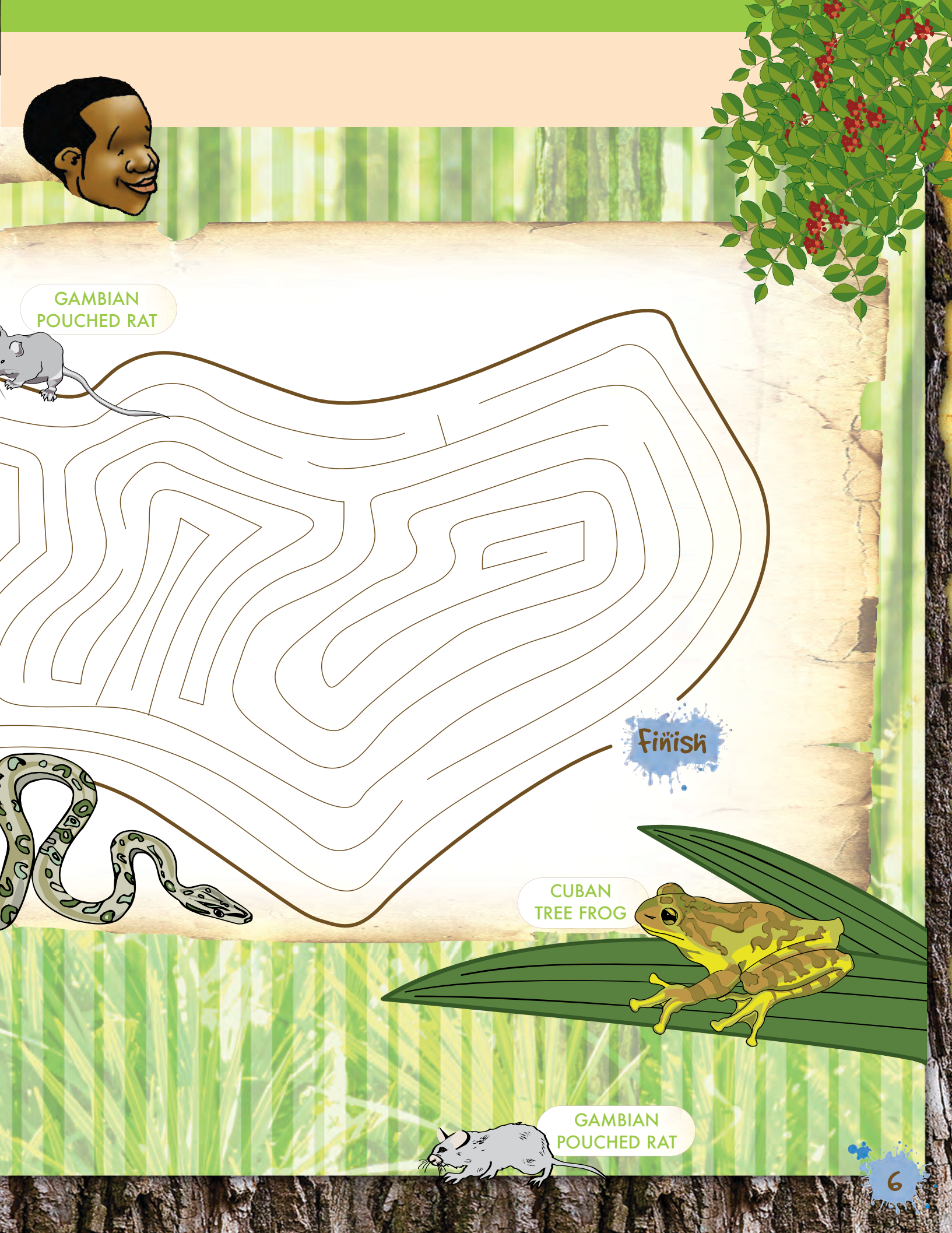
Activity: Maze

Instructions: Wade enjoys jumping around. See if you can help him find his way through this maze.

Fun Facts

A handful of non-native amphibians now call south and central Florida home. While some probably arrived accidentally in potted plants, others have been purposely introduced. According to the National Park Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the **Cuban tree frog** and the **marine toad** are so numerous that it is impossible to eradicate them. This is a risk that we face with the introduction of every invasive species. That is why prevention is so important! For more information, visit www.floridainvaders.org.

MARINE TOAD


GAMBIAN POUCHED RAT
Finish
CUBAN TREE FROG
GAMBIAN POUCHED RAT

Activity: Word Search

Instructions: Do some research and see if you can find out if members of the Waters family are going nuts!

Everett

Opal

Maureen

Otis

V	A	F	R	I	C	A	B	C	D	P	H
A	S	R	E	W	O	L	F	E	A	F	O
C	G	U	H	I	J	K	L	C	M	N	N
A	O	I	P	Q	R	S	K	T	U	W	E
T	V	T	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	Y
I	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	B
O	V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	E
N	P	Q	R	S	T	S	T	U	W	X	E
Y	Z	A	B	C	D	T	E	S	F	G	S
H	I	J	K	L	M	U	N	O	E	P	Q
R	F	I	R	E	A	N	T	S	T	P	U

Willow

Wade

Lakela

Africa	**Flowers**	**Honeybees**	**Pack**	**Vacation**
Fire Ants	**Fruit**	**Nuts**	**Pest**	**Vegetables**

Fun Facts

Invasive plants and animals can greatly alter the native landscape, impact native wildlife, destroy agricultural crops and threaten citizen health. New pests and diseases like **red palm mites, citrus greening, Mexican bromeliad weevil, ficus whitefly, imported fire ants** and **Africanized honeybees** place everyone at risk. When traveling outside of Florida or the United States, residents should avoid bringing back fruit, vegetables, flowers, or nuts. For more information, visit www.floridainvaders.org.

Activity: Crossword Puzzle

Instructions: Lakela wants a pet. Is it a good idea? See if you can guess the clues in this crossword puzzle to discover the answer!

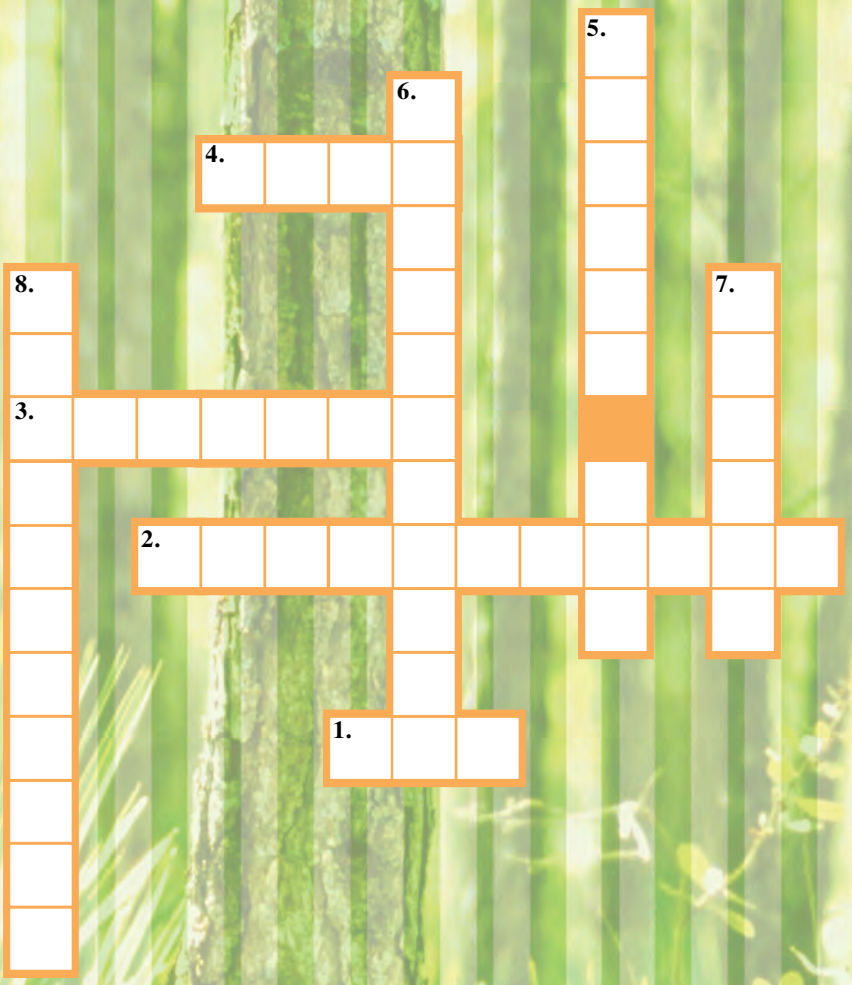
CLUES

Across:

1. This was the name of the pet that the Jackson 5 used to sing about.
2. Cats and dogs are considered _____ pets.
3. This is a non-native pouched rat.
4. The type of pet that Lakela wants can weigh up to _____ pounds.

Down:

5. The type of pet that Lakela wants can carry_____.
6. Everyone should be a _____ pet owner.
7. Invasive species can cause a _____ to Florida's nature and economy.
8. Everyone should be aware of applicable laws and _____.



Fun Facts

Familiar birds and mammals can pose a threat to Florida's nature and economy. Residents are encouraged to be a responsible pet owner and help prevent a problem, as well as be aware of any applicable laws and regulations. Even previously allowed pets, like **Gambian pouched rats**, may have new restrictions in place. Consider adopting a traditional domestic pet and save a life! For more information, visit www.floridainvaders.org.

Activity: Rhyme Time

Instructions: Wade gets tongue-tied very easily. See if you can guess the clues below that are pairs of rhyming words. Example: An ache that increases each day would be .... more sore.

1. Doesn't like gardening

2. Wade is ____; he thinks Willow is _____

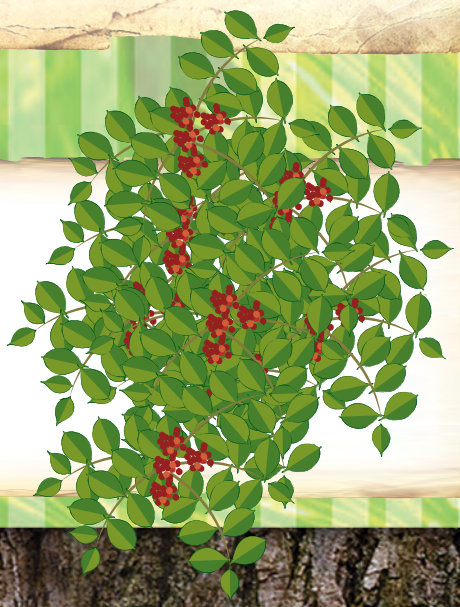
3. Refuse to mow the lawn.

4. Spot a Woman's Tongue.

5. Adhere to water restrictions.

Fun Facts

Invasive plants not only spoil our natural areas, but they can invade your yard and garden too. Once these aggressive plants get a foothold, ripping them out can be a continual challenge. Don't let it loose! Consider natives instead! For more information, visit www.floridainvaders.org.



Answer Key

Activity: Hidden Species Puzzle on page 3

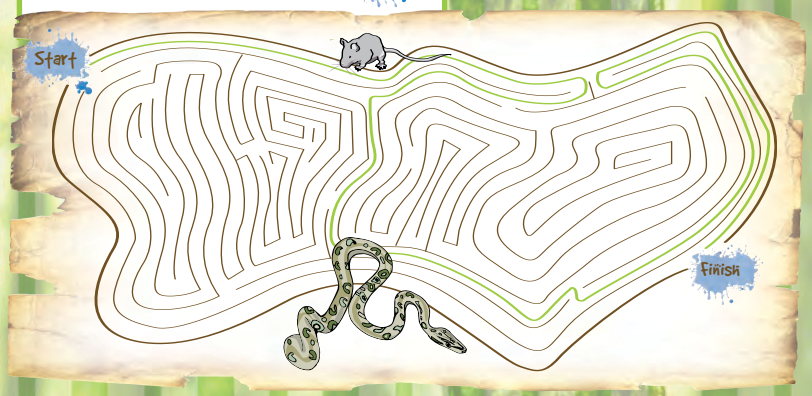
Activity: Decode the Sentence on page 4

Burmese Pythons can grow 20 feet or longer, weigh more than 200 pounds and live 25 years.

Activity: Word Search on page 7

V	A	F	R	I	C	A	B	C	D	P	H
A	S	R	E	W	O	L	F	E	A	F	O
C	G	U	H	I	J	K	L	C	M	N	N
A	O	I	P	Q	R	S	K	T	U	W	E
T	V	T	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	Y
I	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	B
O	V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	E
N	P	Q	R	S	T	S	T	U	W	X	E
Y	Z	A	B	C	D	T	E	S	F	G	S
H	I	J	K	L	M	U	N	O	E	P	Q
R	F	I	R	E	A	N	T	S	T	P	U

Activity: Maze on page 5



Activity: Crossword Puzzle on page 8

Across:
1. Ben
2. Traditional
3. Gambian
4. Nine

Down:
5. Monkey Pox
6. Responsible
7. Threat
8. Regulations

Activity: Rhyme Time on page 9

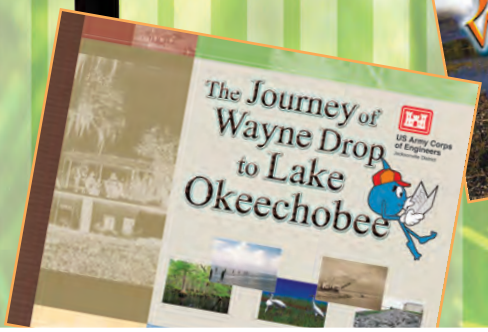
1. Can't Plant
2. Lazy Crazy
3. Disregard Yard
4. See Tree
5. Reduce Use

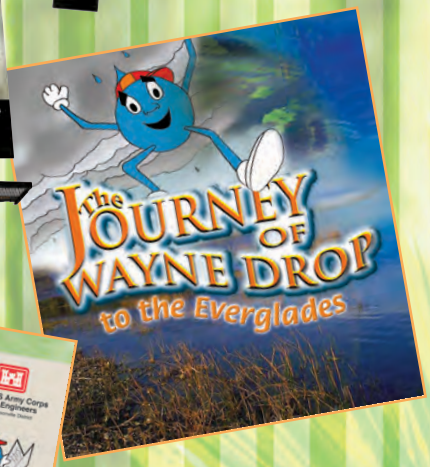
About the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a federal agency that specializes in the planning, engineering, construction and management of large water-related projects. Its Jacksonville District serves Florida and the Caribbean. Missions include flood damage reduction, water resources management, navigation, shore protection and restoration, environmental restoration, military support, emergency response and hazardous, toxic, and radioactive remediation. The Corps of Engineers also is leading the federal efforts to restore the greater Everglades ecosystem. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan – also called "CERP" – will revitalize the Everglades wetlands and other rivers, lakes and coastal estuaries. The state of Florida is an equal partner in this effort.

USACE Everglades Restoration outreach Products

US Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville District





For more information about Everglades restoration, call (877) CERP-USA or visit the web site at www.evergladesplan.org.

For more information about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, call (800) 291-9405 or (904) 232-2234 or visit www.saj.usace.army.mil.

the journey to restore America's Everglades